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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Task Force Staff to Return From Horn of Africa Deployment

Mayport, Fla. – More than sixty Sailors will return home 22 February after a twelve-month assignment as the staff of Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA). Carrier Strike Group Six staff, led by Rear Adm. Richard W. Hunt, deployed to Djibouti on 21 February 2006 to advance coalition efforts to counter terrorism while also enhancing overall cooperation in the region. Relieving a Marine Corps staff, Carrier Strike Group Six was the first Navy unit to lead a ground-based task force in the Global War on Terror.

Under Hunt's leadership, CJTF-Horn of Africa worked to help regional states defeat terrorists on land and sea, while also forging stronger diplomatic ties with key international partners. This work included planning and diplomatic efforts to support our allies and help calm growing regional tensions.

“In Sudan, with violence on the rise against both local populations and humanitarian workers, Admiral Hunt made an historic diplomatic trip to the nation, becoming the first U.S. flag officer to visit in nearly two decades,” said Gen. John Abizaid, U.S. Central Command commander. “Working closely with NATO and the African Union, his visit and follow-on efforts ensured critical international missions would continue in force.”

The task force also conducted military-to-military training in Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Yemen while continuing efforts to enhance the Yemeni Coast Guard's and the Kenyan and Djiboutian Navies' abilities to protect their maritime domains.

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Whether conducting civil affairs projects, providing medical and veterinary assistance, or delivering disaster relief to flood victims, the task force improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of people throughout the Horn of Africa.

“The Horn of Africa is a critical region in the world and this is a defining time,” said Rear Admiral Hunt. “It is a region that we must pay more attention to and provide assistance in their efforts to increase regional stability and to counter extremism. The men and women of CJTF-HOA continue to work with the regional nations to achieve exactly that goal.”

Hunt turned over command of CJTF-Horn of Africa to Rear Adm. James M. Hart. The task force continues to work to set conditions and build capacity for our partners to take the lead in civic, military, economic, and diplomatic activities.

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Media interested in covering the return of Strike Group Six should contact Mayport Public Affairs at (904) 270-5226.

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